Executive summary

1 Presentation of the evaluation

1.1 Evaluation objectives

This End-Term Evaluation (ETE) assessed the results achieved and the overall implementation process of the Water and Sanitation Kigoma Region Project (WASKIRP). It addressed 13 evaluation questions based on the evaluation principles and criteria established by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for development assistance, which have been adjusted by Enabel. These criteria included relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, with particular emphasis on effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Additionally, the evaluation examined three cross-cutting themes prioritised by Enabel: gender equity, environment and climate change, and human rights.

The evaluation focused primarily on the period following the project extension decision, from the last quarter of 2021 to the present. It also incorporated a prospective dimension, aiming to contribute to learning and to derive useful lessons for future interventions, policies, strategies, and programmes.

This evaluation was intended for all project stakeholders, particularly for the implementing agency, Enabel, and the Tanzanian authorities. Implementing partners were also key recipients.

1.2 The WASKIRP project

The WASKIRP project aims to contribute to equitable development and poverty reduction among rural communities in Kigoma by improving access to safe and clean water supply and sanitation services. The project involves the construction of new water supply systems as well as the rehabilitation and expansion of existing ones. Additionally, it seeks to strengthen the capacity of Community-Based Water Supply Organisations (CBWSOs) and the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA) in maintenance, operation, and planning. Another key objective is to enhance hygiene practices to break the contamination cycle from water collection points to points of consumption at home.

WASKIRP targets seven sites serving fifteen villages across six districts: Kigoma, Uvinza, Kasulu, Buhigwe, Kibondo, and Kakonko. The selected sites are predominantly rural, with an estimated population of 200,000.

The project is implemented through a co-leadership arrangement between the Belgian Development Agency, Enabel, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MoWI), and RUWASA.

1.3 Methodology

The ETE approach was participatory, systemic, and holistic, relying on qualitative and quantitative indicators. Particular attention was given to verifying data sources to ensure a high level of triangulation and to guarantee the quality of the findings.

An evaluation matrix was developed to break down each evaluation question into sub-questions, linking them with indicators and specifying sources of verification and data collection methods. While the matrix was not followed mechanically, it served as a guiding framework for structuring the interviews and evaluation analysis.

The evaluation was conducted in four phases: i) Inception phase; ii) Data collection phase (8 days); iii) Analysis and drafting phase; iv) Adjustment and restitution phase.

Based on the evaluation matrix, semi-structured individual and group interviews were conducted with project stakeholders. These interviews were structured around open-ended questions and thematic discussions tailored to each target group. Additionally, focus group discussions were organised. The field phase concluded with a workshop in Dar es Salaam, where the preliminary evaluation results were presented. The workshop was attended by representatives of the Enabel team and the Belgian Embassy. The evaluation team comprised one senior international expert and one senior national expert.

2 Findings and conclusions

Relevance «	A	The relevance of the WASKIRP project is very good.
Coherence	B	The coherence of the WASKIRP project is good.
Effectiveness	B	The WASKIRP project's effectiveness is good.
Efficiency	C	The WASKIRP project's efficiency is problematic.
Sustainability «	C	The WASKIRP project's sustainability is problematic.
Impact	B	The WASKIRP project's impact is good.

2.1 Performance analysis

The relevance of the WASKIRP project is very good. The project aligns with national priorities and policies, leveraging strategic partnerships in sustainable water supply development and sanitation strategies, including the Water Sector Development Programme (WSDP). WASKIRP responds to the critical water supply needs of the local population, strengthens local capacity, and integrates community-based management models, namely CBWSOs. It addresses community needs and priorities concerning access to clean and safe water by mitigating challenges posed by unsafe water sources—such as rivers, streams, and unprotected wells—which expose communities to waterborne diseases. The project objectives also align with Belgian policies and the bilateral framework on development and social well-being.

The coherence of the WASKIRP project is good. Synergies are noted between WASKIRP and other Enabel interventions, primarily with the Sustainable Agriculture Kigoma Region Project (SAKIRP), through the construction of stone arch bridges that facilitate movement within the area and through the mutualisation of equipment and staff. The provision of clean water may also contribute to agricultural product transformation and related value chain development. In terms of external coherence, synergies are less prominent, but no contradictions have been identified. The project aligns with RUWASA's activities in the Kigoma Region. The development of training manuals by Oxford Policy Management Ltd (OPML) may have national effects, as these manuals have been adopted by national authorities.

The WASKIRP project's effectiveness is good. Seven water supply schemes have been built or rehabilitated and are functional, despite a few remaining snags and last-minute completion work. Over 200,000 people benefit from improved access to clean water. Six CBWSOs have been established, and their offices have been completed. Sanitation and hygiene promotion activities have been undertaken in 22 targeted villages across the region.

Despite these successes, some weaknesses remain. In particular, the capacity for operating and maintaining water supply schemes still requires strengthening. CBWSOs need further capacity building, and the impact of hygiene promotion efforts remains limited.

The WASKIRP project's efficiency is problematic. The project closed 2.5 years after the initially planned date and required a 50% budget increase to achieve its results. It ultimately provided clean water at a relatively high per capita cost compared to Tanzanian standards. The causes of inefficiency were multiple. Beyond various issues affecting the construction of water supply systems—including VAT exemption delays, weak contractor management capacity, poor design, inflation, Belgian budgetary revisions, staff turnover, and the impact of COVID-19—quality at entry was very low. Further cross-cutting efficiency constraints beyond water supply scheme construction were also noted, including politicisation, weak financial and administrative management, limited initial backstopping, and challenges posed by water sector reform. Additionally, tensions generated by these problems, along with delays and cost increases, created a downward spiral of discontent, leading to a weak partnership and a blame-and-shame context that further complicated implementation.

The WASKIRP project's sustainability is problematic. Only limited results have been achieved in relation to the operation, management, and maintenance of infrastructure. CBWSO capacity to manage facilities still needs to be strengthened. Ownership remains limited. RUWASA requires further capacity building to effectively fulfil its mandate in supporting CBWSOs. Spare parts supply chains are poorly developed, and private sector involvement in the sector remains low. Catchment protection is inadequate, and the financial sustainability of water supply schemes is weak. Although an upcoming phase-out project may help address some of these issues, the ETE considers that its resources are insufficient to comprehensively resolve them.

The WASKIRP project’s impact is good. Over 200,000 people have gained improved access to safe and clean water, with likely—though unquantified and unconfirmed—positive effects on the time and effort required to fetch water, the prevalence of waterborne diseases, and economic development. The impact on hygiene and waterborne diseases would likely have been maximised with stronger efforts in sanitation infrastructure, particularly latrines.

2.2 In-depth analysis

The post-2022 period successfully completed the construction of the water supply schemes financed by the project. However, despite changes in the management team—including the appointment of a new finance manager and the addition of a contract expert—additional support from Brussels, and improvements in project efficiency, significant delays have persisted. The project has focused almost entirely on infrastructure construction while neglecting capacity strengthening for CBWSOs in operation and maintenance, as well as efforts on catchment protection and hygiene. Although the pace of construction progress improved, the project has not been sufficiently efficient in recovering delays and addressing the distortions recorded during its initial implementation phase.

The limited attention given to operation and maintenance now presents a significant challenge to the sustainability of the water schemes.

The decision-making processes adopted by Enabel do not show clear evidence of effectively considering information provided by staff or the views of local partners regarding concerns recorded during the first phase of implementation, despite RUWASA's increased involvement in decision-making in the latter stages of project implementation. Furthermore, insufficient importance has been given to analytical work.

The evaluation considers that a more effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, along with staff possessing stronger technical expertise, would have helped mitigate some of the challenges faced by the WASKIRP project, though not entirely.

An M&E system has been severely lacking within the project. In practice, despite the undertaking of a baseline, no M&E system was established, and project progress measurement has been almost exclusively centred around monitoring activity execution, primarily in relation to infrastructure construction. Furthermore, the management of archives has, in general, been very weak. Moreover, quality control appears to have been inadequate.

Regarding team composition, a higher engineering profile—not necessarily in the role of project manager—would have been beneficial in identifying design issues earlier and sustaining technical discussions with Tanzanian counterparts, implementing partners, and stakeholders about the various civil engineering challenges that arose throughout the project.

Direct implementation by local partners aligns more closely with the Paris principles of alignment, as it places the partner in a leading role. This approach strengthens ownership and contributes to sustainability. However, in terms of efficiency in time and cost, direct implementation has not represented an improvement. Moreover, given the remaining uncertainties regarding sustainability due to weak operation and maintenance capacities among local actors, the advantages associated with increased ownership do not appear particularly significant. That said, the partnership between Enabel and RUWASA suffered from the challenges faced by the project. As a result, when direct implementation was decided, the relationship was strained and did not provide an ideal context for collaboration. This could imply that the issue lay in the manner and context in which direct implementation took place, rather than in the concept of direct implementation itself.

Risks of water contamination are limited to surface water capture systems. WASKIRP boreholes have all been drilled deep enough to prevent contamination under current levels of pesticide and chemical fertiliser use.

Environment and climate change or human rights have not been much of a focus of attention, though no significant negative impacts are noted in relation to these issues. Similarly, gender is highlighted as an issue of attention at the project formulation level, but no operational strategy to move from consideration to results is planned, and there is no indication that the project has attempted to address the root causes of gender inequity. The gender-related effects associated with WASKIRP stem almost entirely from the nature of the issue it addresses, which inherently affects women and girls due to their responsibilities in water collection.

3 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been identified. They address the main points of attention identified by the mission but are not exhaustive. They are listed in order of priority.

Recommendation 1	*Related conclusion(s)*	*Targeted actors*	*Level**	*Priority*	*Type*
1. Develop a clear phase-out document with RUWASA, based on a clear and honest assessment of the current CBWSO and RUWASA capacities to manage, operate and maintain water supply schemes; as well as prioritise activities according to the available budget.	6, 8, 9, and 10	Enabel, RUWASA	1 and 2	Short term	Operational
2. In future projects, prioritise the operation and maintenance of	8 and 9	Enabel, RUWASA	2 and 3	Short term	Strategic

infrastructure throughout the project cycle, from design to operational support.					
3. Develop M&E systems with local counterparts that extend beyond the individual project level to review progress and serve as project management tools, allowing for performance monitoring and implementation processes adjustments.	3 and 5	Enabel (HQ, Country representation and RUWASA)	1,2 (and 3)	Long term	Operational
4. Prioritise analytical work (including concerning gender) at the formulation stage and during implementation, aligning it with M&E to ensure adequate design, strategic robustness and adaptability.	1, 2, 3 and 11	Enabel	1, 2 and 3	Medium term	Strategic
5. When operating in complex socio-political and administrative contexts, develop a network of contacts, including at high levels, as a mitigation strategy to minimise potential administrative obstacles and /or local problematic situations.	1 and 5	Enabel and project teams	1 and 2	Medium term	Operational
6. Ensure that capacity-building efforts are regular, substantial and articulated with other project activities to maximise results.	6	Enabel and RUWASA	1	Short term	Operational
7. When engaged in civil works, ensure that the necessary engineering capacity is available to monitor and support implementation regularly.	4	Enabel and RUWASA	1	Short term	Operational
8. To maximise health and hygiene impact, associate water supply infrastructure with sanitation infrastructure in water supply projects.	7	Enabel	2 and 3	Medium-term	Strategic

**Level categories: 1 = Project/program, 2 = Representation/country, 3 = Enabel organizational, 4 = Overall cooperation framework.*

4 Lessons learned

<u>Lesson 1</u>: Developing a spirit of co-management is key to the quality of an implementing partnership and matters more than the implementation modalities in determining a project's performance.

Direct implementation by local partners aligns better with the Paris Principles of alignment, as it places the partner in the driving seat. This approach strengthens ownership and contributes to sustainability. However, ultimately, the quality of a partnership, rather than its official modalities (direct implementation, co-management, etc.), is the strongest determinant of an intervention's performance. It is particularly

important that an intervention be implemented in a spirit of co-management, with the effective application of the principles of co-responsibility and co-decision.

Lesson 2: There is a risk that the desire to develop a healthy partnership and demonstrate satisfactory progress in an intervention leads to excessive leniency towards a partner's deficiencies; in such cases, higher levels of hierarchy (steering committee, Enabel headquarters, diplomatic delegations) must step in to resolve the issue.

It is in the interest of project teams and implementing partners to demonstrate the success of their work. This can lead to the minimisation of challenges and tensions, particularly when the quality of a partnership is central to an endeavour's success. Projects and programmes must ensure that the necessary mechanisms (M&E, team dialogue, etc.) are in place to enable the project's hierarchy to be alerted in such situations, which are inherently sensitive as they may imply a shift in responsibility.

Lesson 3: There is a need to communicate at multiple levels of hierarchy (district, regional, national) and with a selection of actors (RUWASA, Commissioners, Ministries, TRA, etc.), ideally including all "political" sides, when problems arise.

Local authorities, as well as higher administrative levels, must be kept informed. When conflicts arise, it is important that the regional management apparatus is aware of developments in case the Ministry or central level calls upon them.

Lesson 4: Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) should not be limited to monitoring activities and results; it must also serve as a tool to reorient a project, analyse its performance, and fine-tune its implementation procedures. Besides, attention should be given to capacity building of project stakeholders to ensure that monitoring tools are applied correctly.

Lesson 5: When a project has to be significantly reoriented, it is best to take a step back and allow for time to analyse and reassess the situation. Indeed, following initial assessment of weaknesses or significant contextual changes, in line with Conclusion 2 and recommendation 4 on the importance of analytical work, a thorough reassessment should be conducted. This reassessment should recognise the need to remain open to a substantial reformulation of corresponding activities, agendas and objectives — rather than adhering to original indicators and timeframes and attempting to adapt to previous plans and institutional agreements. This approach is key to the project's efficiency and effectiveness.